

Indigenous-Focused Graduation Requirement

IMPLEMENTATION
HANDBOOK



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of Education
and Child Care

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Overview

As part of the Province of British Columbia's commitments to truth, reconciliation, and anti-racism, the Ministry of Education and Child Care (the ministry) has implemented an Indigenous-focused graduation requirement for students working toward a B.C. Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma) in English or French.

The new graduation requirement, which came into effect as of the 2023/24 school year, represents an important next step towards lasting and meaningful reconciliation, and builds on work to date including:

- *Increasing Indigenous content and perspectives in the provincial curriculum.*
- *Educator professional development.*
- *A new professional standard for certified educators in B.C.*

This guide is intended to support the implementation process for the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement. The guide provides:

- *Information about the graduation requirement.*
- *Suggestions for schools/school districts to plan for, and support, implementation.*
- *Links to additional resources to support implementation*

This guide is not intended to specifically support classroom implementation of the various courses that meet the new graduation requirement. However, providing support for classroom teachers is addressed in the guide.



Background

In 2019, the B.C. government passed the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) (*Declaration Act*) following the Government of Canada's signing of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UNDRIP). UNDRIP establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of the Indigenous peoples of the world and elaborates on human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of Indigenous peoples. Canada's signing of UNDRIP aligns with existing and longstanding federal legislation, including [Section 35 of the Constitution Act](#) that recognizes and affirms Indigenous rights, and further emphasises the federal government's commitment to protecting and guaranteeing human rights for all. Colonization drastically disrupted the self-determined lives and cultures of Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) across Canada. *The Declaration Act* is both an acknowledgment of these histories and a commitment by the Government of B.C. to affirm and restore the human rights of Indigenous peoples. B.C.'s Declaration Act establishes UNDRIP as the

Province's framework for reconciliation, as called for by the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action](#). This historic legislation was developed in collaboration and consultation with Indigenous partners.

The First Nations Leadership Council, First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), and education partners including the British Columbia School Trustees Association, B.C. Teachers' Federation, and the British Columbia Association of Institutes and Universities, formally advocated for a new Indigenous-focused graduation requirement.

The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement directly responds to the commitment in the [Declaration Act Action Plan](#) to implement a mandatory course or bundle of credits related to First Peoples as part of graduation requirements in British Columbia (Action 3.4). The new requirement is also consistent with the obligations in the [B.C. Tripartite Education Agreement](#), which include *"advancing reconciliation between the Crown and First Nations, as expressed in the TRC's Calls to Action and the UN declaration"* and *"decolonizing approaches to First Nations education and developing new approaches aligned with the UN declaration"*.

In spring 2022, government conducted a provincial engagement process on how to implement the new graduation requirement via a public online survey; meetings with school district staff, and K-12 and post-secondary education partners; and focused efforts to engage Indigenous communities and peoples. This included sending consultation letters to 201 B.C. First Nations with more information on the new requirement and an invitation to provide feedback. Outreach was also conducted with 39 Métis Chartered Communities in B.C. Finally, engagement materials and an invitation to participate in the online public engagement were shared with the Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, Indigenous Employees Network, and Native Education College (Vancouver), and FNESC shared information on the new requirement with First Nations at its annual regional sessions. A ["What We Heard Report"](#) highlighting the feedback received from all of these activities was released in June 2022, and the results informed the implementation plan for the new graduation requirement.

Implementing an Indigenous-focused graduation requirement is also part of the First Nations Anti-Racism Strategy being developed by FNESC at the direction of First Nations, to address systemic racism towards Indigenous students in the public education system. The new requirement also reflects ongoing work by the ministry, FNESC, Métis Nation B.C., and other education partners to build capacity within the public education system to address Indigenous-specific racism.



United Nations
DECLARATION
on the **RIGHTS**
of **INDIGENOUS**
PEOPLES



Links to the documents mentioned above:

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007):

https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (2015):

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf

B.C. Tripartite Education Agreement (2018):

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/ways-to-learn/aboriginal-education/bc-tripartite-education-agreement.pdf>

B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (2019):

<https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/19044>

B.C.'s Declaration Act Action Plan (2022):

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/government/ministries-organizations/ministries/indigenous-relations-reconciliation/declaration_act_action_plan.pdf

What We Heard – Indigenous-focused Graduation Requirement (June 2022)

https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/121/2022/06/What-We-Heard-Indigenous-Graduation-Requirement-June-16_22-Final.pdf

Rationale

Why This Requirement Is an Important Step in the B.C. Education System

Implementation of an Indigenous-focused graduation requirement is an exciting and important next step in the K-12 sector's ongoing journey towards truth and reconciliation, which has included integrating Indigenous perspectives, histories, and cultures across the curriculum, into professional development opportunities for educators, and into the B.C. Teachers' Council's Professional Standards for B.C. Educators.



Prior to the introduction of the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement, fewer than 5% of graduates completed any of the Indigenous-focused provincial courses or First Nations language courses at the secondary level.

The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement provides all students with time and opportunity to develop deeper understandings and a broader knowledge base of Indigenous peoples, communities, cultures, histories, and contemporary contexts. This is an important part of the K-12 sector's mandate to develop the Educated Citizen, which can in turn help to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in our schools and communities.

This graduation requirement also provides an opportunity for schools and school districts to consult and collaborate with First Nation(s) on whose territory they are located.

Relationship with Existing Indigenous-focused Learning Standards

The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement does not replace the learning standards that currently exist in the B.C. curriculum. The graduation requirement is intended to build on the existing curriculum and provide students with the opportunity to engage in full Indigenous-focused coursework to develop a deeper understanding and broader knowledge base of First Peoples perspectives, histories, and cultures. Educators are still required to deliver the current mandated provincial curriculum, including all First Peoples focused learning standards.



Gathering Strength – Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996), emphasizes the important role of education “to correct erroneous assumptions and to dispel stereotypes that still abound in the minds of many Canadians, distorting their relationships with Aboriginal people.”

The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement in British Columbia reflects awareness of the needs to address the historical gaps in the K-12 system where Indigenous peoples, cultures and histories have been absent or distorted, and aligns with the Report's call for “transforming the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian society” by ensuring that accurate information about the history and cultures of Aboriginal peoples and nations, the role of treaties in the formation of Canada, and the distinctive contributions of Aboriginal people to contemporary Canada should form part of every Canadian student's education.

Model

The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement came into effect as of the 2023/2024 school year. Any students graduating with a B.C. Dogwood in 2023/2024 or subsequent years are required to have successfully completed this requirement.

Secondary students are able to meet the requirement through a variety of existing and new course options. Students are required to complete 4 credits of Indigenous- focused coursework to graduate. Students can earn these credits by successfully completing:

- ✓ One or more of the existing, Indigenous-focused provincial courses
- ✓ A First Nations language course at the Grades 10, 11, or 12 level
- ✓ A locally developed, Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) course that meets specific criteria
- ✓ A First Nation Language and Culture External Credential

While the total number of credits required to graduate remains unchanged at 80 credits, students can choose to take additional credits if desired. Over 90% of B.C. graduates already earn more than 80 credits towards graduation. Students also have the option to meet more than one graduation requirement at the same time, depending on their school or district's specific course offerings – for example:

- English First Peoples 12 would meet both the existing English Language Arts requirement for Grade 12 as well as the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement
- B.C. First Peoples 12 or Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12 would meet both the existing Social Studies requirement for Grades 11 and 12, as well as the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement

All students working towards the B.C. Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma), in English or French, are required to complete the new graduation requirement, including students at B.C. certified offshore schools.



There are currently no changes to the Adult Graduation Program

The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement does not impact students' transition to post-secondary studies. All B.C. post-secondary institutions accept the Indigenous-focused provincial courses in the B.C. curriculum for general admissions purposes. **English First Peoples courses are also already accepted as an English equivalent by post-secondary institutions in Canada.** For any enquiring institutions outside of B.C. or Canada, the ministry indicates that the English First Peoples courses are equivalent to English Language Arts.

Options to Meet the Requirement

Students have the opportunity to meet the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement in several ways, depending on their school or school district's specific course offerings. There is the ability for courses to be offered in grades 10, 11, and 12, which supports students in continuing their learning journey throughout the graduation years.

Provincial Course Options

The following options represent existing Indigenous-focused courses in the B.C. curriculum.

- English First Peoples – Literary Studies 10*
- English First Peoples – New Media 10*
- English First Peoples – Spoken Language 10*
- English First Peoples – Writing 10*
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies and New Media 11
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies and Spoken Language 11
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies and Writing 11
- English First Peoples 12
- B.C. First Peoples 12
 - *Peuples autochtones de la Colombie-Britannique 12*
- Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12
 - *Études autochtones contemporaines 12*



** Indicates a two-credit course – would meet half of the requirement.*

In the Provincial courses, “First Peoples” is inclusive of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

For full course descriptions, please see Appendix A.

Provincial Indigenous-focused courses have been developed through a collaborative process that includes both Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators. As other provincial courses are developed, they may be added to this list of courses meeting the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement. English First Peoples courses were developed with the guidance of an advisory Committee that included Indigenous educators, scholars, and knowledge-holders, along with representation from various education partners. The First Peoples Principles of Learning were articulated by the Advisory Committee during the development of the English First Peoples 12 course. A copy of the First Peoples Principles of Learning can be found here:



<http://www.fnesc.ca/first-peoples-principles-of-learning/>

The provincial, Indigenous-focused Social Studies and English Language Arts courses provide students with the opportunity to learn about both historical *and* contemporary contexts of First Peoples in B.C. and Canada in rich and robust ways, including learning from (not just about) Indigenous peoples. In various ways, the courses help students develop a breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding about the diverse Indigenous peoples, cultures, communities, histories, and communities in B.C. and Canada.

First Nations Language Courses

There are several First Nations language courses currently offered as provincial courses. One of these First Nations language courses at the grades 10, 11, or 12 level can satisfy the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement.

These courses include:

- ʔayʔaɣuθəm 10 to 12 and Introductory ʔayʔaɣuθəm 11
- Dakelh 10 to 12 and Introductory Dakelh 11
- Gitxsenimx ~ Gitxsanimax 10 to 12 and Introductory Gitxsenimx ~ Gitxsanimax 11
- Halq'eméylem 10 to 12 and Introductory Halq'eméylem 11
- Heiltsuk 10 to 12 and Introductory Heiltsuk 11
- Hul'q'umi'num' 10 to 12 and Introductory Hul'q'umi'num' 11
- Kwak'wala 10 to 12 and Introductory Kwak'wala 11
- Liqwala/Kwak'wala 10 to 12 and Introductory Liqwala/Kwak'wala 11
- Nedut'en 10 to 12 and Introductory Nedut'en 11
- nsíylxcən 10 to 12 and Introductory nsíylxcən 11
- Nteʔkepmxcin 10 to 12 and Introductory Nteʔkepmxcin 11
- Nuučaan̓uḥ 10 to 12 and Introductory Nuučaan̓uḥ 11
- Secwepemctsin (Shuswap Language) 10 to 12 and Introductory Secwepemctsin 11
- SENĆOŦEN 10 to 12 and Introductory SENĆOŦEN 11
- Shashishalhem (Sechelt Language) 10 to 12 and Introductory Shashishalhem 11
- Sim'algaxhl Nisga'a 10 to 12 and Introductory Sim'algaxhl Nisga'a 11
- Sm'algyax 10 to 12 and Introductory Sm'algyax 11
- Stát'yemcets 10 to 12 and Introductory Stát'yemcets 11
- Tsek'ene 10 to 12 and Introductory Tsek'ene 11
- Upper St'at'imcets 10 to 12 and Introductory Upper St'at'imcets 11
- Xaayda Kil / Xaad Kil Grades 10 to 12 and Introductory Xaayda Kil / Xaad Kil 11

As other First Nations language courses are developed, they may be added to this list of courses meeting the graduation requirement.



NOTE: As per the [B.C. Tripartite Education Agreement](#) and the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#), a new First Nations Language Policy is under development with FNESC. Further information will be shared at a later date.

Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) Courses

Locally developed courses designed to meet the new Indigenous-focused graduation requirement should provide an opportunity for educators and students to explore content beyond the boundaries of the provincial ministry curriculum. These BAA courses can help provide choice and flexibility for students while allowing educators to respond to the priorities of local First Nations and the school/school district.

BAA courses developed to meet the graduation requirement must:

- Include content that provides the opportunity for students to develop a meaningful and substantial breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of specific First Nation peoples, cultures, worldviews, and histories in British Columbia.
- Ensure that learning about and from First Nation peoples and cultures in B.C. is a significant outcome (courses may still focus on specific curricular areas).
- Be co-developed and approved by one or more local First Nation[s].
- Be developed for grade 10, 11, or 12.
- Meet all existing BAA course requirements.

While courses can reflect any credit option (1, 2, 3, or 4 credits), students will need to take additional eligible courses to meet the full graduation requirement if the course is less than 4 credits.

For additional information on the BAA process, including details on the updated process for BAA courses intended to meet the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement, please visit the Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) and First Nation Authorized (FNA) Courses Requirements and Procedures Guidebook:



https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/support/baa_requirements.pdf

For a copy of the updated BAA Course Form, please visit:



https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/support/baa_form.pdf

Equivalency and Course Challenge

Boards of education and independent school authorities are expected to apply the same policies and procedures for equivalency requests as are used for other current graduation course requirements. Some cases of course equivalency and challenge may meet the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement. The policies and procedures for a course equivalency also apply to locally developed, Indigenous-focused BAA courses.

External Credentials, Dual Credit, Independent Directed Studies (IDS)

Students can meet the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement by completing a First Nations Language and Culture External Credential. To see the list of eligible programs participating in the External Credentials Program, please visit:



<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/graduation/getting-credit-to-graduate/external-credentials>

Currently, post-secondary credit (including dual credit) and independent directed studies do not meet the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement. Policies related to earning credit through equivalency, challenge, external credentials, post-secondary credit (dual credit), and IDS can be found on the ministry website here:



<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/earning-credit-through-equivalency-challenge-external-credentials-post-secondary-credit-and-independent-directed-studies>

School District/Authority Considerations

Suggestions for School District/Authority and Regionally Based Support

School districts and independent school authorities may wish to develop district/authority based or regionally based networks to support implementation of the new graduation requirement. For example, school districts/authorities might consider the following:

- Establish district/authority and/or regionally based learning networks of English First Peoples 10, 11, or 12, B.C. First Peoples 12, and Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12 teachers. For example, hosting monthly voluntary in-person or virtual meetings of teachers in the school district/authority/region who will be, or are, teaching these courses can provide opportunities for teachers to share ideas and examples of what is working well regarding implementation.
- Develop a “train the trainer” model of professional learning for teachers teaching English First Peoples 10, 11, or 12, B.C. First Peoples 12, and Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12 courses at the district/authority or regional level.
- Develop a mentorship model where experienced teachers support those new to teaching the courses, developing relationships where information can be shared, and lessons learned can be explored.

Establishing School and School District Leads

The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement is a core graduation requirement. School districts/authorities may wish to establish school leads and school district/authority leads to support implementation of the new requirement. School and district/authority leads would be people who would be fully knowledgeable about the requirement, and people whom others can contact for information. A school lead could be a principal, vice-principal, teacher, or counsellor. A district/authority lead could be a District Principal, Director of Instruction, or person in a similar role. While Indigenous education leads in schools and school districts can provide support, it will be important for schools/districts to ensure that the implementation of this requirement is not perceived as the responsibility of the Indigenous education leads.

Educator Considerations and Resources

Who Teaches the Course?

The provincial courses, First Nations language courses, and locally developed, Indigenous-focused BAA courses are best taught by teachers trained to teach in the related curricular area, as currently exists in the K-12 system.

Some English Language Arts and Social Studies teachers who have not taught B.C. First Peoples 12, Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12, or English First Peoples courses may not feel equipped to do so due to lack of cultural knowledge or familiarity with the Indigenous focus of the courses. However, this need not be a barrier to teaching the courses. The only necessary criteria beyond an expertise in the curricular area is an interest in teaching these courses and a willingness to learn. FNEC teacher resource guides are available to support teachers in creating engaging, rich learning experiences for their students and to expand their own comfort with the course material. FNEC teacher resource guides can be found here:



<http://www.fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples/>

Over the last decade, many non-Indigenous educators have been teaching English First Peoples 10, 11, and 12 courses effectively. These teachers have taken opportunities to engage in continued professional learning and have worked collaboratively with other Indigenous educators and community members.

Educators are encouraged to watch the following video of three teachers, two of whom are non-Indigenous, who share their experiences teaching English First Peoples. The video “English First Peoples Courses: An Introduction” is available at:



<https://vimeo.com/270411670>

Implementation support will need to vary according to the specific needs of schools and school districts/authorities. While some districts/authorities are at the beginning stages of implementing Indigenous-focused courses for their students, other districts/authorities have already been planning for, or implementing, Indigenous-focused courses for entire schools or school districts. An important factor for effective implementation in almost every context will be the provision of time for teachers to plan for courses that will be new to them. Teachers may also need additional time to engage in more learning about and from Indigenous peoples, cultures, and histories.

Professional Development

Effective implementation should include a variety of supports. These could include workshops, webinars, and networks. Time should be planned for teachers to engage in professional learning. Some schools or school districts may also benefit from creating opportunities for teachers who will be teaching the same courses as each other to co-plan. Schools and school districts are encouraged to determine the needs of their teachers and to develop a plan to provide professional learning opportunities in advance of courses being offered for the first time, and then provide follow-up workshops, webinars, or networking opportunities for teachers in their first year(s) of teaching Indigenous-focused courses that are new to them.

It may be helpful to expand professional learning opportunities connected to the teaching of courses to meet the new graduation requirement to all educators, even if they are not currently slated to teach one of the eligible courses. This reflects a commitment for on-going professional learning in Indigenous education. The following 9th Professional Standard applies to all individuals holding a Certificate of Qualification to teach in B.C. K-12 public, independent, off-shore and First Nations school systems:

Teacher Resources

Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation, and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of ways of knowing and being, histories, and cultures of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

Educators critically examine their own biases, attitudes, beliefs, values, and practices to facilitate change. Educators value and respect the languages, heritages, cultures, and ways of knowing and being of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Educators understand the power of focusing on connectedness and relationships to oneself, family, community, and the natural world. Educators integrate First Nations, Inuit and Métis worldviews and perspectives into learning environments.



https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/teach/teacher-regulation/standards-for-educators/edu_standards.pdf

B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care – Indigenous Education Resources & Inventory

Indigenous education resources have been developed to support the B.C. K-12 curriculum. The intent of these materials is to help further incorporate Indigenous knowledges and perspectives into classrooms. An Indigenous education resource inventory, along with “Continuing Our Learning Journey: Indigenous Education in B.C.” (an optional professional development resource for teachers dedicated to Indigenous learning) can be found on the ministry’s curriculum website at:



<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/indigenous-education-resources>

FNESC Teacher Resource Guides

FNESC has developed a Teacher Resource Guide to support the implementation of English First Peoples 10, 11, 12. A link to the English First Peoples guide can be found at:



<http://www.fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples/efp/>

A Teacher Resource Guide for B.C. First Peoples 12 is also available on FNESC’s website:

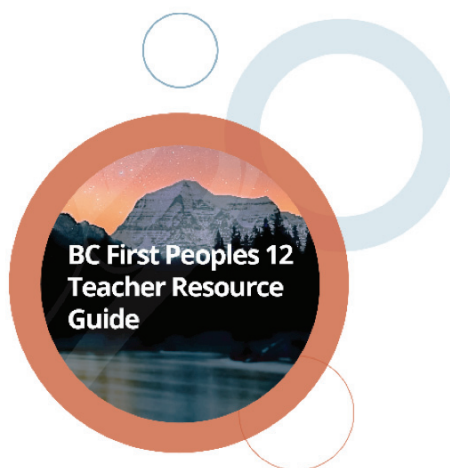


<https://www.fnesc.ca/bc-first-peoples-12-teacher-resource-guide/>



These rich teacher resources guides contain thematic units as well as additional materials to support the teaching of EFP and BCFP 12 courses such as information related to:

- Learning About and Using First Peoples Pedagogy
- Themes and Topics
- Interconnectedness
- Connection to Place and Land
- The Power of Story
- Definition of Key Terms and Terminology
- Inclusion of Local Community Resources
- Communicating with Parents
- Establishing a Positive Classroom Climate
- Dealing with Sensitive Topics
- Indigenous Knowledge and Worldviews
- Protocols
- Reciprocity and Responsibility
- Indigenous Speaker Considerations



The FNEsc teacher resource guides also include annotated bibliographies of the resources recommended for use in the units and lessons.

FNEsc Workshops

FNEsc hosts day-long workshops and summer institutes throughout the year designed to support implementation of EFP 10, 11, and 12, BCFP 12, and other courses in addition to hosting an annual Indigenous Education Conference. Information on the workshops and the annual Indigenous Education Conference can be found at:



<http://www.fnesc.ca/>

The ministry and FNEsc continue to work with the B.C. School Superintendents Association (BCSSA) and the Federation of Independent School Associations (FISA) B.C. to host professional development opportunities for educators. Information on these professional development opportunities for upcoming school years will be provided through the ministry, FNEsc, BCSSA, and FISA as it becomes available.

Student Learning Resources

Authentic Indigenous Resources

It is important to ensure that, as much as possible, authentic Indigenous resources for students are used for any new courses. Authentic Indigenous resources are historical or contemporary texts that:



- Present authentic First Peoples voices (i.e., are created by First Peoples or through the substantial contributions of First Peoples).

- ✓ Depict themes and issues that are important within First Peoples cultures (e.g., loss of identity and affirmation of identity, tradition, healing, role of family, importance of Elders, connection to the land, the nature and place of spirituality as an aspect of wisdom, the relationships between individual and community, the importance of oral tradition, the experience of colonization and decolonization).
- ✓ Incorporate First Peoples storytelling techniques and features as applicable (e.g., circular structure, repetition, weaving in of spirituality, humour).

First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2016

A short video that explains the importance of using authentic Indigenous resources in B.C. classrooms is available at:



<https://vimeo.com/522356808>

Lists of authentic Indigenous resources to use for English First Peoples 10, 11, and 12 courses, B.C. First Peoples 12 and other potential Indigenous-focused courses can be found at:

- FNEESC Learning First Peoples Teacher Resource Guides and Annotated Bibliographies
<http://www.fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples/>

Additional resources can be found here:

- Métis Nation B.C. Education Links and Resources
<https://www.mnbc.ca/education>
- Focused Education Resources Indigenous Education Resources
<https://focusedresources.ca/en/>
- BCTF Teaching and Classroom Resources
<https://www.bctf.ca/classroom-resources>
- GoodMinds.com – First Nations, Métis, Inuit Books – Bound to Impress
<https://goodminds.com/>
- Pulling Together: A Guide for Indigenization of Post-Secondary Institutions
<https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationfoundations/>
- B.C. Campus Pulling Together: A Guide for Teachers and Instructors
<https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationinstructors/>



Note: Educators are encouraged to use the checklist above for guidance on what to look for when identifying authentic Indigenous resources.

Additional Focused Education Resources Support

Focused Education Resources can assist schools/districts with the evaluation of resources, excluding textbooks. These reviews are for information purposes and can support schools/districts in making decisions on purchasing.

Focused Education's K-12 Evaluated Resource Collection has reviews of digital and print resources that may support Indigenous studies and Indigenous-focused graduation course requirements. For more information, visit:



<https://focusedresources.ca/en/k-12-evaluated-resource-collection> (search the Indigenous collection)

Roles of Indigenous Education Departments

While important and necessary, the exact involvement of a school district's Indigenous Education Department will vary from district to district. It is essential for everyone to understand that the implementation of the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement is *not* the responsibility of school districts' Indigenous Education Departments.

Implementation can be best supported when there is effective communication and collaboration between school district leadership and the Indigenous Education Departments. This may also include creating processes for Indigenous Education Departments to share out what school district resources are available for teachers, and what processes might be available to access resources outside of the school district including what Indigenous community resources might be available. It will be helpful to ensure educators understand that implementation of any new Indigenous-focused courses should not add to the work of Indigenous Support Workers, especially those whose role is to support Indigenous students. Some Indigenous Education Departments may have cultural support people who can aid classroom teachers and students, but they may have limited capacity to support all teachers and students—particularly where there is a sudden and significant increase in the number of Indigenous-focused courses being offered.

It is important to ensure that all teachers of Indigenous-focused courses are aware of resources available to them through the school district's Indigenous education departments. This also includes understanding that the Indigenous education departments will already have existing processes in place for connecting with local First Nations and other Indigenous groups to support the participation of Indigenous Elders and other Knowledge-Holders in Indigenous-focused courses.



Communication Support

Proactive communication about the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement can help ensure that students and families understand the requirement and help mitigate anxiety that may arise from misconceptions (e.g., that the requirement means fewer elective choices, that it will negatively impact entrance into post-secondary education, etc.). Change may bring feelings of uncertainty but communicating the opportunity for student learning and growth is of the utmost importance. There are various ways that school districts/authorities can communicate information about the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement with parents/guardians and students. Districts/authorities should choose options that meet the needs of their diverse contexts.

Communication support to help district/authority leadership and staff, principals/vice-principals, counsellors, and teachers respond to questions about the requirement and/or about the courses that can meet the requirement is also important. It will be helpful for educators to have discussions focused on understanding why the change to the graduation program is being implemented, and the opportunity it provides students. A full understanding of what the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement is and why it is necessary can support school and district/authority leadership and staff in responding to related questions from students and parents/caregivers. This understanding can be developed by taking the time to read and discuss the Rationale and Background sections of this guide, including the external links referenced in those sections.

The ministry and FNEC have also created video materials that communicate the rationale and benefits of the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement. Schools/districts are able to use these videos in sessions with staff, students, and families to highlight the many benefits of introducing the new requirement. These videos can be found at:



<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/indigenous-focused-graduation-requirements>

Communicating with Parents/Families

School districts/authorities may wish to consider a variety of options for their communications strategies. This could include newsletters, information on the school/district website, social media, etc. It is helpful for communications to include a contact person that parents/caregivers can access if they have questions or concerns.

Brochure

The ministry has developed a brochure with basic information related to the new graduation requirement that can be shared with parents/caregivers. The brochure is available online in English and translated in seven languages:



<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/indigenous-focused-graduation-requirements>

Q&A

The ministry and FNEC have developed a complete Q&A document to support schools and school districts/authorities in their communications with students, families, and staff. The Q&A is available at:



<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/download/C7CDCAC82A6A41F99CF9B79660EE204A>

Resource Considerations

Targeted Indigenous Education Funding

The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement is a core education requirement for all students attending B.C. public and independent schools. Targeted Indigenous Funding, which is to be used for supports and services for self-identified Indigenous students (over and above supports and services provided to all students), is not eligible to support the implementation of this graduation requirement.

Ministry Resources for School Districts/Authorities

The ministry and FNEESC are continuing to work with the B.C. School Superintendents Association (BCSSA) and the Federation of Independent School Associations (FISA) B.C. to provide school districts/authorities with additional implementation supports for the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement. Information on the implementation supports for upcoming school years will be provided through the ministry, FNEESC, BCSSA, and FISA as it becomes available. For further inquiries, public school districts should contact the BCSSA at information@bcssa.org, and independent school authorities should contact FISA at info@fisabc.ca.

Curriculum and Learning Support Fund



<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/bulletin/20230315/dm-bulletin-curriculum-and-learning-support-fund-clsf-2023-24.pdf>

This fund has been established to assist districts with implementing initiatives as part of the provincial curriculum, including Indigenous content. As noted in the link above, should you have any questions about this funding, please contact the Funding and Financial Accountability Branch:



EDUC.FFAB@gov.bc.ca

Contact

Questions? School and district administrators are encouraged to contact the ministry at:



GradRequirements@gov.bc.ca



Appendix A



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Preparing for and implementing the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement may require that school districts/authorities be aware of potential “pushback” to the requirement. This may surface in the form of overt and covert racism. Districts/authorities are encouraged to have discussions with staff to help prevent Indigenous students, educators, and families from becoming the targets of any resistance to the change.

While it is hoped that the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement will be implemented smoothly, schools and school districts/authorities are encouraged to be prepared for and pay attention to any potential rise in Indigenous-specific racism. This may include:

- *Indigenous students or staff being asked to explain or justify the new graduation requirement.*
- *Indigenous students or staff being asked to speak for all Indigenous peoples.*

It is also important to recognize that not taking action to support lasting and meaningful reconciliation negatively impacts all students, including Indigenous learners. Districts/authorities are encouraged to provide opportunities for educator and support staff learning in the areas of Indigenous-specific racism as well as bias and privilege.

B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care – Curriculum Guide to Anti-Racism



<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/anti-racism>

The ministry has worked with a team of IBPOC (Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour) educators to develop [Anti-Racism: A Guide for Teachers](#). This guide gives teachers in B.C. additional tools and strategies to include anti-racism education as part of their teaching practices and to help foster learning address hatred and celebrate diversity.

B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care – Expect Respect and A Safe Education (erase)



<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase>

erase includes resources related to:

- Bullying
- Racism
- Mental health and well-being

BCTF Resources



<https://www.bctf.ca/topics/services-information/aboriginal-education>

At the request of BCTF members, the BCTF may be able to provide workshops for teachers and workshops for parents in areas that include:

- Indigenous-Specific Racism
- B.C. Blanket Exercise: Exploring Historical Relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples
- Deconstructing Myths

Focused Education Resources



<https://focusedresources.ca/en/anti-racism-learning-resources-project>

Focused Education Resources has a summary of Anti-Racism Learning Resources.

Friendship Centres



<https://bcaafc.com/about-us/friendship-centres/>

In some areas of the province, Friendship Centres can be an additional resource for educators.

Implicit Bias Module Series - Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity



<https://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-module-series>

These videos provide a starting point for understanding implicit bias and uncovering biases to begin addressing them.

Manitoba Ministry of Education – Racism-Free Schools



https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/racism_free/full_doc.pdf

Creating Racism-Free Schools through Critical/Courageous Conversations on Race (2017).

Racial Equity Tools Glossary



<https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

Resilience BC



<https://antiracist.gov.bc.ca/>

Anti-Racism Posters and Resources.

Safe Schools BC



<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/teach/teaching-tools/student-safety/scoguide.pdf>



Appendix B



PROVINCIAL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

English First Peoples – Literary Studies 10

(2-credit course. This would meet half the requirement)

EFP Literary Studies 10 is designed for students who are interested in exploring First Peoples literature in a variety of contexts, genres, and media. This area of choice provides students with opportunities to explore personal and cultural identities, histories, stories, and connections to land/place. This course is grounded in the understanding of how texts are historically and culturally constructed. Students will work individually and collaboratively to broaden their understanding of themselves and the world.

The following are possible areas of focus within EFP Literary Studies 10:

- Thematic study of First Peoples literature (e.g., family, humour, connection to land, resistance, belonging, identity).
- Locally developed First Peoples texts.
- Specific First Nations, Métis, or Inuit author study.
- First Peoples children's literature.
- Storytelling in a First Peoples context.



For more information about this course, along with potential cross-curricular opportunities:
https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/english-language-arts/en_english-language-arts_10_efp-literary-studies_elab.pdf

English First Peoples – New Media 10

(2-credit course. This would meet half the requirement)

EFP New Media 10 is designed for students who are interested in exploring the increasing importance of digital media in communicating and exchanging ideas. This area of choice provides students with opportunities to think about the use of new media and its effects on individuals and on First Peoples communities and cultures. Students will work individually and collaboratively to develop skills needed in an increasingly complex digital world as they demonstrate understanding and communicate ideas through a variety of digital and print media.

The following are possible areas of focus within EFP New Media 10:

- Media and film studies related to First Peoples themes—ideas include representation of First Peoples in media and documentaries in the age of digital media.
- Journalism and publishing related to First Peoples themes—ideas include changing roles and structures within news organizations and how journalism and publishing can support preservation and revitalization of language and culture.
- Digital communication related to First Peoples themes—ideas include blogging, writing for the web, writing for social media, gaming, and podcasting.



For more information about this course, along with potential cross-curricular opportunities:
https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/english-language-arts/en_english-language-arts_10_efp-new-media_elab.pdf

English First Peoples – Spoken Language 10

(2-credit course. This would meet half the requirement)

EFP Spoken Language 10 is designed for students who are interested in studying First Peoples oral traditions and in developing their oral self-expression and communication in a variety of contexts. Within a supportive community, students will work individually and collaboratively to develop their writing skills and create coherent, purposeful, and engaging oral texts for a variety of purposes. This area of choice will provide students with opportunities for performance and public speaking.

The following are possible areas of focus within EFP Spoken Language 10:

- Performance—ideas include spoken word/slam poetry, poetry recitation, oral storytelling, readers' theatre, radio/podcasts/video posts related to First Peoples themes.
- Oral tradition—ideas include oratory, local story knowledge, and oral history.
- Professional applications—ideas include speech writing/presenting, proposals, interviewing, event facilitation, radio/podcasts/video posts (information items) related to First Peoples themes.



For more information about this course, along with potential cross-curricular opportunities:
https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/english-language-arts/en_english-language-arts_10_efp-spoken-language_elab.pdf

English First Peoples – Writing 10

(2-credit course. This would meet half the requirement)

EFP Writing 10 is designed for students who are interested in writing for a variety of purposes and contexts. This area of choice provides students with opportunities to become better writers through the exploration of personal and cultural identities, memories, stories, and connections to land/place. Within a supportive community, students will work individually and collaboratively to develop their writing skills and create coherent, purposeful, and engaging compositions. This course is grounded in the exploration and application of writing processes, inviting students to express themselves as they experiment with, reflect on, extend, and refine their writing.

The following are possible areas of focus in EFP Writing 10:

- Community-focused text—ideas include creating written work that relates to and/or contributes to local First Peoples communities (e.g., community performances, proposals, technical communications).
- Writing for advocacy—ideas include creating narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and opinion pieces, with attention to audience, purpose, and technique.
- Writing for expression—ideas include creating slam poetry, oratory, rap, drama, song, or multimodal work related to First Peoples themes.
- Exploration of First Peoples themes—ideas include contextualizing self in relation to community, expressing relationship to land, with consideration of issues such as cultural appropriation and inauthenticity.



For more information about this course, along with potential cross-curricular opportunities:
https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/english-language-arts/en_english-language-arts_10_efp-writing_elab.pdf

English First Peoples – Literary Studies and New Media 11

EFP Literary Studies and New Media 11 is designed for students who are interested in studying First Peoples literature and examining the evolving role of technology today, especially the increasing importance of digital media in communicating and exchanging ideas and engaging in social advocacy. Students delve deeply into First Peoples oral and written literature and text in a range of media to explore various themes, authors, and topics.

The course provides a foundation for students to think critically and creatively as they continue to explore, extend, and strengthen their own writing and communication. Students examine the increasingly complex digital world and have opportunities to demonstrate understanding and communicate sophisticated ideas through a wide variety of digital and print media. Through the study of literature and critical engagement with new media, students:

- Extend their capacity to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts.
- Deepen their understanding of themselves and the world.
- Expand their understanding of what it means to be educated Canadian and global citizens.

The following are possible areas of focus in EFP Literary Studies and New Media 11:

- The influence of new media on First Peoples personal and cultural identities – ideas include cultural homogenization, authenticity in representation, and cultural appropriation.
- Exploration of First Peoples themes as represented in new media – ideas include creating multigenerational narratives, contextualizing self in relation to community, expressing relationship to land, with consideration of issues such as cultural appropriation and inauthenticity.
- New media performance art in relation to First Peoples themes – ideas include creating slam poetry, oratory, rap, drama, song, or multimodal work.
- Intersections between First Peoples themes and online social advocacy – ideas include Indigeneity and feminism, Indigeneity and LGBTQ, Indigeneity and inclusion, and Indigeneity and environmental sustainability.
- Media studies related to First Peoples themes – ideas include the globalization of the media industry, representation of First Peoples in media, and documentaries in the age of digital media.
- Journalism and publishing related to First Peoples themes – ideas include changing roles and structures within news organizations; risks, challenges, and opportunities associated with professional journalism; how journalism and publishing can support preservation and revitalization of language and culture.
- Digital communication related to First Peoples themes – ideas include blogging, writing for the web, writing for social media, gaming, and podcasting, and potentially including how these can support preservation and revitalization of language and culture.



For more information about this course, along with potential cross-curricular opportunities:
https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/english-language-arts/en_english-language-arts_11_efp-literary-studies-and-new-media_elab.pdf

English First Peoples – Literary Studies and Spoken Language 11

EFP Literary Studies and Spoken Language 11 is designed for students who are interested in studying First Peoples literature and oral tradition and in strengthening their oral language proficiencies. The course emphasizes oral self-expression and communication in a variety of contexts. Students delve deeply into First Peoples oral and written literature in a range of media to explore various themes, authors, and topics. This provides a foundation for them to think critically and creatively as they continue to explore, extend, and strengthen their own repertoire of oral language expressions. Within a supportive community, students work individually and collaboratively to explore oral and written literature and create powerful, purposeful oral and written compositions. Through the study of literature and the processes of experimenting with, reflecting on, extending, and refining their oral language, students:

- Extend their capacity to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts.
- Deepen their understanding of themselves and the world.
- Expand their understanding of what it means to be educated Canadian and global citizens.

The following are possible areas of study within EFP Literary Studies and Spoken Language 11:

- First Peoples oral tradition – ideas include oratory, local community story, and oral history.
- Exploring the relationships between First Peoples literature, oral tradition, and personal and cultural identities – ideas include self-representation, connection to family and community, and connection to land and place.
- Oral language related to First Peoples cultures – ideas include exploring oral histories and creating oral narratives, with consideration of issues such as cultural appropriation and inauthenticity.
- Performance in relation to First Peoples themes – ideas include creating slam poetry, oratory, poetry recitation, oral storytelling, readers' theatre, rap, drama, song, or multimodal work.
- Professional applications – ideas include speech preparation/presenting, proposals, interviewing, event facilitation, radio/podcasts/video posts (information items), and voice-overs related to First Peoples themes.
- Intersections between First Peoples literature, oral language, and social advocacy – ideas include cultural reclamation, youth engagement, inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

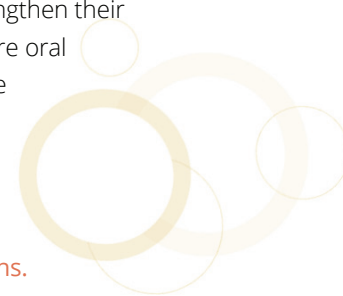


For more information about this course, along with potential cross-curricular opportunities:
https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/english-language-arts/en_english-language-arts_11_efp-literary-studies-and-spoken-language_elab.pdf

English First Peoples – Literary Studies and Writing 11

EFP Literary Studies + Writing 11 is designed for students who are interested in studying First Peoples literature and using writing for self-expression and communication in a variety of contexts. Students delve deeply into First Peoples oral and written literature in a range of media to explore various themes, authors, and topics. This provides a foundation for them to think critically and creatively as they continue to explore, extend, and strengthen their own writing. Within a supportive community, students work individually and collaboratively to explore oral and written literature and create powerful, purposeful compositions. Through the study of literature and the processes of experimenting with, reflecting on, extending, and refining their writing, students:

- Extend their capacity to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts.
- Deepen their understanding of themselves and the world.
- Expand their understanding of what it means to be educated Canadian and global citizens.



The following are possible areas of study within EFP Literary Studies + Writing 11:

- Community focused text – ideas include creating written work that relates to local First Peoples resources and supports community-driven initiatives (e.g., commemorative works, community performances, proposals).
- Exploring personal and cultural identities in relation to First Peoples in Canada and elsewhere – ideas include genre-specific, author-specific, or thematic study of First Peoples literature.
- Exploration of First Peoples themes – ideas include creating multigenerational narratives, contextualizing self in relation to community, and expressing relationship to land, with consideration of issues such as cultural appropriation and inauthenticity.
- Performance art in relation to First Peoples themes – ideas include creating slam poetry, oratory, rap, drama, song, or multimodal work.
- Academic, technical, and professional composition – ideas include Indigenous and Western approaches to research and writing for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Intersections between First Peoples themes and other social justice issues – ideas include Indigeneity and feminism, Indigeneity and LGBTQ, Indigeneity and inclusion, and Indigeneity and environmental sustainability.



For more information about this course, along with potential cross-curricular opportunities:
https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/english-language-arts/en_english-language-arts_11_efp-literary-studies-and-writing_elab.pdf

English First Peoples 12

EFP 12 builds upon and extends students' previous learning experiences in English 10 and 11, and EFP 10 and 11 courses. The course is grounded in the First Peoples Principles of Learning. It is designed for all students who are interested in delving deeply into First Peoples oral, written, and visual literature and texts in a range of media. The course focuses on the experiences, values, beliefs, and lived realities of First Peoples as evidenced in various forms of text, including oral story, poetry, song, performance, film, and prose. A key feature of the course is its focus on authentic First Peoples voices (i.e., historical, or contemporary texts created by or with First Peoples). In EFP 12, students:

- Examine texts grounded in a diversity of First Peoples cultures, including local First Nations or Métis communities.
- Extend their capacity to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts.
- Think critically and creatively about the uses of language.
- Deepen their understanding of themselves and others in a changing world.
- Gain insight into the diverse factors that have shaped and continue to shape their own identities.
- Appreciate the importance of self-representation through authentic First Peoples text.
- Contribute to Reconciliation by building greater understanding of the knowledge and perspectives of First Peoples.
- Expand their understandings of what it means to be educated Canadian and global citizens.

While the focus in EFP 12 is primarily on First Peoples voices from British Columbia, students also engage with texts that reflect First Peoples perspectives from elsewhere in Canada and throughout the world.



For more information about this course, along with potential cross-curricular opportunities:
https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/english-language-arts/en_english-language-arts_12_english-first-peoples_elab.pdf

B.C. First Peoples 12

B.C. First Peoples 12 focuses the development of knowledge, skills, and competencies for students to be active, informed citizens who can think critically. The course focuses on the exploration of the following big ideas:

- The identities, worldviews, and languages of B.C. First Peoples are renewed, sustained, and transformed through their connection to the land.
- The impact of contact and colonialism continues to affect the political, social, and economic lives of B.C. First Peoples.
- Cultural expressions convey the richness, diversity, and resiliency of B.C. First Peoples.
- Through self-governance, leadership, and self-determination, B.C. First Peoples challenge and resist Canada's ongoing colonialism.



For more information about this course:

https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/social-studies/en_social-studies_12_bc-first-peoples_elab.pdf

Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12

Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12 focuses the development of knowledge, skills, and competencies for students to be active, informed citizens who can think critically. The course focuses on the exploration of the following big ideas:

- The identities, worldviews, and languages of indigenous peoples are renewed, sustained, and transformed through their connection to the land.
- Indigenous peoples are reclaiming mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being despite the continuing effects of colonialism.
- Indigenous peoples continue to advocate and assert rights to self-determination.
- Reconciliation requires all colonial societies to work together to foster healing and address injustices.



For more information about this course:

https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/social-studies/en_social-studies_12_contemporary-indigenous-studies_elab.pdf

Appendix C



SCHOOL/DISTRICT PROFILES – IMPLEMENTATION AND/OR PLANNING

Prior to the announcement of the new Indigenous-focused graduation requirement, several schools/districts in B.C. had already made (or were in the process of making) English First Peoples courses the required English Language Arts course offering at certain grade levels. English First Peoples courses were often chosen as the Indigenous-focused course because these courses provide rich learning opportunities for students, while not reducing the number of electives for students in the graduation program.



SD 34 Abbotsford

- Began process in 2021.
- Fully implemented the graduation requirement in 2022/23

Following the process of engaging in an Equity Scan, the district determined that they could improve on the number of English First Peoples courses being offered across the district. The Principal of Indigenous Education also advocated for more schools to be offering First Peoples courses. The Superintendent challenged secondary principals to offer at least one block of English First Peoples at every school. In addition, following the announcement by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc in May 2021 regarding the unmarked graves of children who attended the Kamloops Residential school, the district's Indigenous Education Council underscored the need for schools to do further work to help students learn more about and from First Nations. This was a catalyst.

A survey was sent to secondary teachers to see who would be interested in teaching English First Peoples courses; over forty teachers indicated interest, which exceeded initial expectations, and the process of determining what supports were needed began.

Two Vice-Principals, the District Principal of Indigenous Education, the Director of Instruction, and various teachers worked to support the implementation of the First Peoples required courses. In the 2021/22 school year, the district hosted six sessions to support secondary counsellors, vice principals, and prospective First Peoples teachers. The District Principal of Indigenous Education also did a presentation to the District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) and at several school PAC meetings.

To support teachers to feel prepared and confident in teaching Indigenous-focussed courses, the district prepared numerous detailed resources for these courses. Using the FNESC resources and ministry curriculum, teachers were hired using a structure of "night school" for work in addition to regular positions, to create teaching resources. To localize the resources for each course, these teachers collaborated with local Knowledge Keepers and Elders. Specific examples for courses using local stories, land-based activities and teachings were put together and are now accessible in the Ray and Millie Silver Library. Teachers also attended Professional Development Days with guest speakers such as Anne Tenning.

The district successfully offered forty-four courses including various blocks of English First Peoples, B.C. First Peoples, Contemporary Indigenous Studies and Halq'emeylem.

One successful teaching strategy was having a weekly residency in each secondary class with a Teacher for Indigenous Success supporting Indigenous pedagogy. This teacher had regular times each week that she would be in attendance and was available to co-teach, plan, and support teachers. This increased the level of engagement from teachers. The district also worked with their local Nation to offer more fieldtrips that were hosted by the Nation, such as the Xáytem Cultural Site. Each class had the opportunity to participate in land-based activities and learn cultural teachings from local Knowledge Keepers and Elders.

Challenges in implementation included changes in teachers assigned to classes due to staffing, staff movement, and enrollment. This resulted in some teachers not having the previously described preparation. The residency support has helped in these cases. Another challenge was that teachers who had been teaching B.C. First Peoples for many years felt confident and did not access the new resources available. Unfortunately, some teachers continued to use outdated resources. The district is working to address this in each school, as ongoing development of Professional Standard 9 is imperative, as well as continuing discussion about how inauthentic and stereotypical texts exacerbate racism.

Abbotsford School District has fully implemented the new graduation requirements in 2022/2023 and will continue to refine and expand in 2023/2024.

SD34 successfully offered 44 First Peoples courses across the district in 2022/23.



SD68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith

- Began with pilot in 2021/22
- In 2022/2023 English First Peoples (EFP) 10 was the main ELA 10 course offering in all high schools

In 2021/22, the Nanaimo-Ladysmith district began with a pilot project where all students at Nanaimo District Secondary School took a 2-credit English First Peoples 10 course along with a 2-credit English Language Arts 10 course.

As a result of the pilot project, the district determined that in the 2022/23 school year, all grade 10 students would take 4 credits of English First Peoples 10 and it would be offered as the main English Language Arts course at the grade 10 level. Grade 10 English First Peoples was chosen because the district believes that students' positive experience at the grade 10 levels will encourage more students to choose to continue with English First Peoples courses in grades 11 and 12. In addition, the district selected Grade 10 for this change so that Indigenous students can see themselves reflected in their learning early-on in their grad program years (10-12). It is anticipated that this will help to further improve graduation rates for students of Indigenous ancestry, which has been on a steady incline over the past several years.

While the district anticipated that there might be some resistance to the change (in the form of people not understanding why the change was happening), they have indicated that there has been no significant resistance from staff or parents/guardians. As the courses continue to be implemented, the district continues to be attentive and responsive to potential negative actions toward Indigenous students or staff as the implementation continues to unfold.

All prospective English First Peoples teachers have received two days of district provided in-service so far, as well as two additional days for planning and collaboration. A substantial resource grant was also provided by the district to each school offering EFP 10. With all of these supports in place, SD68 anticipates a successful transition of EFP 10 across the system. For 2022/23, they hosted two workshops ('checkpoints') for teachers to come together, reflect, and check-in as a group to learn from one another's experiences.

The district leads with the strong conviction that Truth and Reconciliation is a collective responsibility and so while the students are immersed in the learning that EFP 10 brings, the district will be working hard with their teams in creating an array of courses that are rich in culture, language, and representative of the histories of their local Nations.

For 2022/23, SD68 hosted two workshops ('checkpoints') for teachers to come together, reflect, and check-in as a group to learn from one another's experiences.



SD53 Okanagan Similkameen

- English First Peoples (EFP) courses began in 2019/20 at Similkameen Elementary Secondary School
- In 2022/23, all secondary schools in SD53 offered EFP 11 or 12

In 2018/19, EFP 10 was offered as a choice to meet the ELA 10 requirement at Similkameen Elementary Secondary. It was strongly promoted, and most students selected EFP 10, so only EFP 10 ended up being offered. This happened again the following school year. Starting in 2020/21, EFP 10 was made the only course offering for English Language Arts (ELA) 10. EFP 12 has also been available to students for the past three years, but starting in 2022/23, it will be the only option for ELA 12. EFP 12 has been a great fit so far as almost all students have taken EFP 10.

There has been very little pushback to the transition to the EFP courses at Similkameen Elementary Secondary from students, staff, or parents/guardians. Much of the success of the EFP courses is attributed to an incredible teacher. The school is building capacity in the offering of First Peoples courses and there were two teachers in 2022/23 instead of one. In addition, Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12 was offered for the first time by a third teacher.

During the 2022/23 school year, all secondary schools successfully offered EFP 11 or 12, and will continue this approach for the 2023/24 school year. Similkameen Elementary Secondary continues to only offer EFP at the grade 10 and 12 level. Each school is ensuring that at least 2 different teachers are provided with the opportunity to teach an EFP course so that capacity is developed, teachers can support each other, and successful continuity of the program is ensured. The district shares with pride that everyone teaching these courses *wants* to teach them.

Much time has been spent listening to student voice and why the First Peoples courses are important to them. The emphasis continues to be on culturally responsive instruction and cultural safety for students of Indigenous Ancestry, as well as the necessity of these courses for the benefit of all students. The response from students who have taken the EFP courses has been positive.

The district has been offering professional development for all teachers who will be teaching First Peoples courses and continues to fund resources and release time as needed. Opportunities have been provided for new teachers to observe current EFP courses being taught. The district has also funded all new resources that will be needed for

teachers to successfully implement these courses. The district has also purchased hardcopies of the FNESC teaching resources. Having a vision for the courses has been an essential foundational part of the planning process. School librarians are helping school teams with the selection of resources. Regular check-ins are provided for EFP teachers to discuss their experiences and to allow the opportunity to share challenges and successes.

During the 2022/23 school year, all secondary schools in SD53 successfully offered EFP 11 or 12.

